

Contents

PAGE

6



About Korean

Learn about Korean, build your own sentences and pronounce words correctly.

Introduction	6
Top Phrases	8
Pronunciation	10
Grammar	18

PAGE

35

Travel Phrases

Ready-made phrases for every situation – buy a ticket, book a hotel and much more.



Basics

35

Understanding	36
Numbers & Amounts	38
Time & Dates	45



Practical

51

Transport	52
Border Crossing	69
Directions	71
Accommodation	75
Shopping	87
Communications	97
Money & Banking	104
Business	108

Sightseeing	110
Senior & Disabled Travellers	115
Travel with Children	117



Social 119

Meeting People	120
Interests	134
Feelings & Opinions	139
Going Out	144
Romance	150
Beliefs & Culture	154
Sports	158
Outdoors	164



Safe Travel 171

Emergencies	172
Police	175
Health	178



Food 189

Eating Out	190
Self-Catering	206
Vegetarian & Special Meals	209

PAGE **212**



Menu Decoder

Dishes and ingredients explained –
order with confidence and try new foods.

PAGE **221**



Two-Way Dictionary

Quick reference vocabulary guide –
3500 words to help you communicate.

English–Korean Dictionary	221
Korean–English Dictionary	253

Index	268
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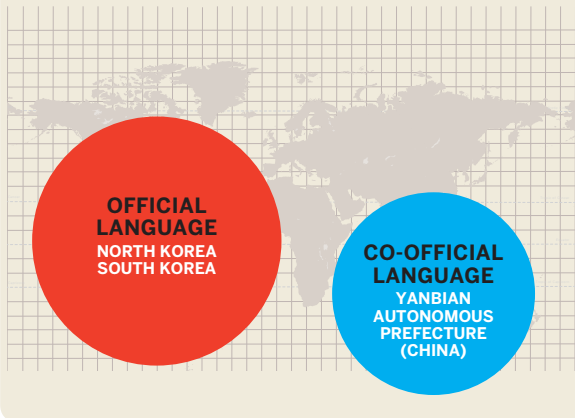


INTRO

Korean

한국어 han·gu·gŏ

Who Speaks Korean?



Why Bother

To understand what makes Koreans tick, you should know something about harmony and hierarchy, highly valued principles that draw on Confucian ideals. Start with the language: the Korean greeting **an·nyŏng**

ha-se-yo 안녕하세요? (How are you?) is literally translated as 'Are you peaceful?'.

Distinctive Sounds

Korean distinguishes between 'aspirated' consonants (pronounced with a puff of air) and 'unaspirated' ones.

70 MILLION

speak Korean as their first language

10 MILLION

speak Korean as their second language

Korean Script

Korean script, Hangul, is simple and accessible. Each character represents a sound of its own. The emphasis is on the formation of syllables: eg 한 (the syllable **han**) is formed by an **h** (ㅎ), an **a** (ㅏ) and an **n** (ㄴ) in a syllabic 'box'. These 'boxes' are strung together to form words.

Korean Lexicon

Two sets of numbers are used: 'pure' Korean and 'Sino-Korean' (Korean pronunciation of words of Chinese origin). Each system has cardinal and ordinal numbers, but each is used for counting different types of things. Koreans will be forgiving if you mix them up!

Borrowings from English

Korean has borrowed many words from English, often combining them in a way that makes sense to Korean ears – eg **won-num** 원룸, from 'one room', is a studio apartment.

Language Family

Ural-Altaic – Manchu and Mongolian are listed as close relatives, though many scholars consider Korean a 'language isolate'.

Must-Know Grammar

Pronouns are generally not used in Korean. Instead, people are referred to by their name, title or relationship to the speaker. This book uses the so-called 'familiar polite form', a practical middle ground suitable for most situations.

Donations to English

Not many – you may recognise *kimchi* or *taekwondo*.

5 Phrases to Learn Before You Go

1 Do you have a Western-style room?

서양식 방 있나요? *sŏ-yang-shik pang in-na-yo*

Smaller lodgings may only have Korean-style rooms (with floor mattresses). If you want a 'proper' bed, check ahead.

2 Please bring a fork/knife.

포크/ナイ프 가져다 주세요. *p'o-k'ŭ/na-i:p'ŭ ka-jŏ-da ju-se-yo*

In Korean restaurants the spoon is meant for rice and soup, and chopsticks are for everything else; ask if you need other utensils.

3 Can you make it less spicy?

덜 맵게 해 주시겠어요? *tŏl maep-ké hae-ju-shi-gess-ŏ-yo*

Korean food is an enthusiastic assault on the senses, often spicy enough to trigger off sweat or tears – you may want to play it safe.

4 Where can I find a steam-room?

찜질방 어디에 있나요? *jjim-jil-bang ŏ-di-é in-na-yo*

Generally open 24 hours, these facilities at public baths are perfect when you need some down time – whether to watch TV, read, just relax or even sleep overnight.

5 Please call the tourist interpreting service.

통역 서비스에 전화해 주세요.

t'ong-yŏk sŏ-bi-sŭ-é chŏn-hwa-hae-ju-se-yo

To ensure that you get to the right place, Korean taxi drivers have a number to call to hook you up with someone who will translate directions for you.



look for	찾~	ch'aj~ (last vowel a)
I* look for	찾아요	ch'a·ja·yo (ch'aj + a·yo)
melt	녹~	nok~ (last vowel o)
it melts	녹아요	no·ga·yo (nok + a·yo)

If a verb stem ends in **a** 아 without a consonant following it, ~yo is added instead of ~a·yo:

go	가~	ka~
I* go	가요	ka·yo (not ka·a·yo)

If a verb stem ends in **o** 오 without a consonant following it, ~o·a·yo at the end (the verb stem's o + a·yo) can be changed to ~wa·yo:

see	보~	po~
I* see	봐요	pwa·yo (or po·a·yo 보아요)

If the verb stem ends in **ŭ** 으, the **ŭ** is replaced with ~ö·yo:

use	쓰~	ssŭ~
I* use	써요	ssö·yo (ssŭ - ŭ + ö·yo)

If the last vowel of the verb stem is **ö**, **u**, **i** or a combination vowel, ~ö·yo is added to the stem:

learn	배우~	pae·u~
I* learn	배워요	pae·wö·yo (pae·u + ö·yo)



Car

I'd like to hire a/an ...

... 빌리고 싶어요.

... pil-li-go shi-p'ö-yo

4WD

사률클동

sa-ryun-gu-dong

automatic

오토매틱

o-t'o-mae-t'ik

car

차

ch'a

manual

수동

su-dong

with air conditioning/
a driver

에어컨/기사 있는

e-ö-k'ön/ki-sa in-nŭn

How much for daily/
weekly hire?

하루/한 주

렌트에 얼마예요?

ha-ru/han-ju

ren-t'ü-é öl-ma-ye-yo

Do you have a road map/
atlas?

지도 있나요?

chi-do in-na-yo

windscreen

앞유리
am-nyu-ri

battery

배터리
pae-t'ö-ri

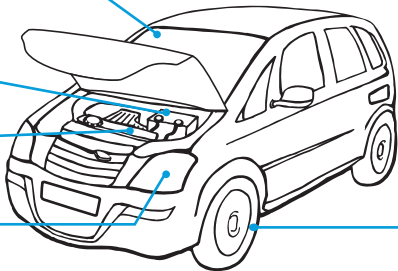
engine

엔진
en-jin

headlight

헤드라이트
he-dü-ra-i-t'ü

petrol

기름
ki-rŭm

tyre

타이어
t'a-i-ö